

IN THE CLAIMS:

All claims currently pending and under consideration in the referenced application are shown in the listing of claims and will replace all prior versions and listings of claims in the application. Claims 8-11 are amended herein. Claim 25 has been added. Claims 22-24 are cancelled. No new matter has been added. Please enter these claims as amended.

Listing of the Claims:

1-7. (cancelled).

8. (Currently amended) An isolated nucleic acid sequence encoding a protein, said protein characterized by an ability to form a complex with receptors of the Tumor Necrosis Factor ("TNF") superfamily including the cytoplasmic domain of CD40 as determined by a yeast two-hybrid interaction assay or a co-immunoprecipitation assay, said protein comprising amino acids 54-140 of SEQ ID NO:2, or amino acids 54-362 of SEQ ID NO:2, or amino acids 54-273 of SEQ ID NO:2, or amino acids 54-236 of SEQ ID NO:2 ~~or a fragment thereof of at least 10 consecutive amino acids in length and which is able to form said complex.~~

9. (Currently amended) The isolated nucleic acid sequence of claim 8 ~~with 70-100% nucleotide similarity to the~~ comprising the nucleotide sequence of SEQ ID NO:1 or a homologue thereof encoding a protein which is 65% identical to the amino acid sequence of SEQ ID NO: 2.

10. (Currently amended) The isolated nucleic acid sequence of ~~claim 8~~ claim 9, ~~with 70-100% nucleotide similarity to~~ wherein the homologue comprises the nucleotide sequence of SEQ ID NO:3.

11. (Currently amended) ~~The~~ An isolated nucleic acid sequence ~~of claim 8 with 70-100% nucleotide similarity to the nucleotide sequence of SEQ ID NO:5 encoding a protein comprising SEQ ID NO:6 or a fragment thereof comprising amino acids 2-245 of SEQ ID NO:6.~~

12-24. (cancelled).

25. (New) An isolated nucleic acid sequence encoding a protein, said protein characterized by an ability to form a complex with receptors of the Tumor Necrosis Factor ("TNF") superfamily including the cytoplasmic domain of CD40 as determined by a yeast two-hybrid interaction assay or a co-immunoprecipitation assay, said protein comprising amino acids 115-121 of SEQ ID NO:2, or amino acids 145-153 of SEQ ID NO:2, or amino acids 347-352 of SEQ ID NO:2.